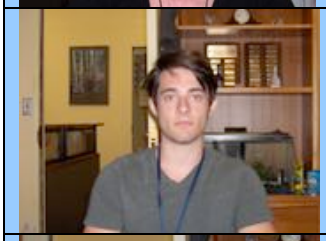
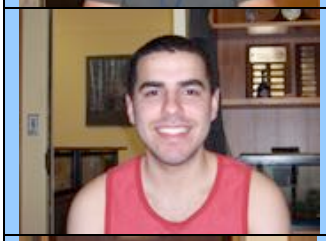
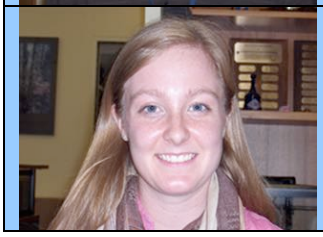
What's New in Biochemistry

PERSONNEL NEWS:

	Hetalben Kalariya left her Sr. Research Support Specialist position in Ed Berry's lab to relocate with her husband to New Jersey.
	Manana Maziashvili replaces Hetal in Ed's lab as a Sr. Research Support Specialist. Manana previously worked for Dr. Diana Gilligan here at Upstate in the Department of Medicine.
	Charles Ryan joins Mark Schmitt's lab as a summer Student Assistant.
	Mark Rodriquez joins Patty Kane's lab as a summer Student Assistant.
	Darin Dolezal completed the PhD portion of his MD/PhD degree in Francesca Pignoni's lab and has returned to complet the MD portion of the degree here at Upstate.
	Tim DeMarsh joins Wenyi Feng's lab as a SURF student. Tim is an undergraduate at SUNY Cobleskill.
	Isabel Utschig joins Stewart Loh's lab as a SURF student. Isabel is an undergraduate at Marquette University.

	Brooke Hamling joins Xin Jie Chen's lab as a SURF student. Brooke is an undergraduate at SU.
	Gianno Pannafino joins Bruce Knutson's lab as a SURF student. Gianno is an undergraduate at LeMoyne College.
	Marissa Smith joins Bruce Knutson's lab as a Graduate Assistant.
	Michael Jaskolka joins Patty Kane's lab as a Graduate Assistant.
	Danea Glover joins Bruce Knutson's lab as a Student Assistant.
	Dr. Steven Goodman is leaving to accept the Vice Chancellor for Research position at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis, TN.

GRANTS:

Congratulations to Adam Blanden who received a 3-year NIH Fellowship for his project entitled "Restoring the Missing Zinc: A quantitative investigation of p53 hotspot mutant reactivation by synthetic metallochaperones for cancer chemotherapy".

Congratulations to Michael Cosgrove who received a 5-year NIH grant renewal entitled "Molecular Mechanisms for the Assembly and Regulation of the MLL1 Core Complex". The first years directs are $237,500.

AWARDS, RECOGNITIONS, AND OTHER ACTIVITIES:

In March David Amberg went to Ecuador to teach a workshop on Bioethics and Research Integrity in Quito Ecuador for Yachay, The City of Knowledge. He also got a tour of the Yachay site which is an entirely new and technologically advanced smart city, designed around a new technology University in Imbabura provence of north Ecuador in the Andes mountains. During the visit David signed, for the University, an MOU with Yachay for increased research and education collaboration between Upstate Medical University and Yachay. He also did some hiking in the Andes.

David hiked around a crater lake that is on the flank of a larger volcano called Cotacachi. The hike was at 12,000 feet.

Dormitories at Yachay.

The library at Yachay which is part of an old hacienda, it was the sugar cane processing plant turned into a beautiful library.

Congratulations to Darin Dolezal (4th from left) who successfully defended (with Honors!) the PhD portion of his MD/PhD degree. Darin's advisor is Adjunt Ophthalmology Associate Professor, Francesca Pignoni (5th from left).

Darin (left) and Dr. Bill Brunken (right), Research Director of the CVR, at celebration.

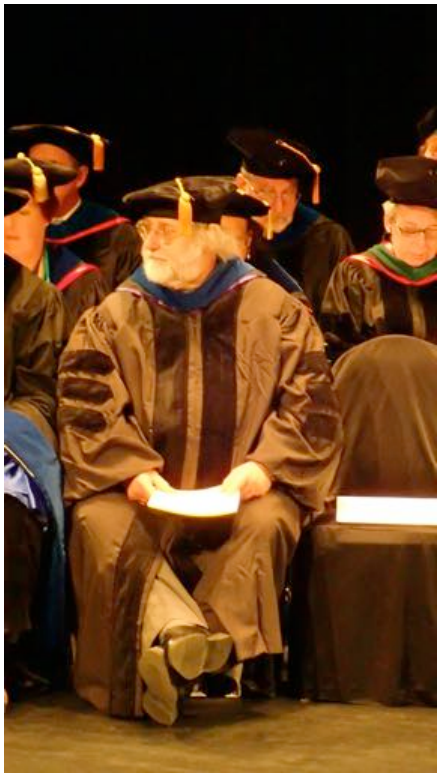
Congratulations to Diana Dunn her passed her Qualifying Exam on June 17th.

Rich Cross gave the speech at the 2015 Upstate College of Graduate Studies graduation ceremony on Sunday, May 17th. His speech is attached as Appendix 1.

Pictures provided by Steve Hanes from 2015 Graduate School Commencement on Sunday, May 17th.

PhD graduates.

Mark Schmitt (Dean of College of Graduate Students), right, and Gregory Eastwood (Interim President), left, presenting 2015 Graduate School Teacher of the Year to Stewart Loh, center.



Commencement Speaker, Rich Cross (Emeritus SUNY Distinguished Professor) waiting to give his speech.

VP for Research, David Amberg, far right.

Biochemistry PhD graduates, Stephen Shinsky (left) and Naman Shah (right).

Mark Schmitt (Dean of the College of Graduate Studies), front center, awaiting to present award. Rich Cross (front left) looks on.

Advisor Tom Duncan (left back) hooding Naman Shah (front left) and advisor Michael Cosgrove (back right) hooding Stephen Shinsky (front right).

Unfortunately, we lost the softball cup at the annual GSA picnic at Green Lakes State park in June. We were beat by a combined team from all of the other departments. Hopefully, next year Steve Hanes will be well enough to play and Stewart Loh may put himself in more!! The loss was not from a lack of trying. Mark Schmitt tried to turn a single into a home run and the catcher fell on him and he sprained his wrist. Penny ended up with an injured wrist and bruised shin from knee to top of foot from a very awkward slide on second. Maybe we are getting too old for this. Thank you to Xin Jie Chen for taking 350+ pictures that are being kept in the departmental photo binder.

PERSONAL NEWS:

Patty Kane's son, Josh Popp, is the valedictorian of CBA's Class of 2015.
http://www.cbasyracuse.org/popp-valedictorian-oconnor-salutatorian-of-class-of-2015/
Article on Syracuse.com:
http://www.syracuse.com/schools/index.ssf/2015/05/high_school_graduations_2015_christian_brothers_academy_valedictorian_josh_popp.html

Congratulations to Adam Blanden and his wife, Melanie, who welcomed their daughter, Leah Jane Blanden, on May 29th, at 8:20 am. Leah weighed 9 lbs., 7 oz.

NEWS ABOUT ALUMNI:

Dr. Gino Cingolani welcomed his second daughter, Emma, who was born on December 30, 2014. She is almost 4 months and she is healthy, peaceful, and weighs 19 lbs!!! A wonderful baby girl!

David Turner shared some sad news:

Penny, Rich, and John,

I received a note from Bob Hsu today, saying that his wife Gretchen had "passed away peacefully" on May 29 at age 82, with Bob and their two sons at the bedside. The note said she had battled Hodgkin's lymphoma for several months.

A memorial service will be held on June 29 at Piece Brothers Griffin Chapel, 101 Wilbur Rd, Thousand Oaks CA 91360.

Bob's address is 3225 Hidden Creek Ave., Thousand Oaks CA 91360.

Sad news. I really liked Gretchen, as did Nancy, and as did our two sons, with whom Gretchen had a special rapport. Gretchen was a straight shooter. I remember an occasion early on when I must have bowed slightly when addressing her. She upbraided me, pointing out that she was Chinese, not Japanese. Chinese people don't bow, she said. And I have to mention one more thing: Gretchen was a great cook. Her dish made with fresh peanuts and tofu was extraordinary.

David

Dr. Cherry Mae Ignacio is leaving her postdoc position in Frank Middleton, et al. labs for a position at a genomics software company, Partek, in St. Louis. She will be a Field Application Scientist.

Appendix 1

Rich Cross' Commencemnt Speech

I'm very happy to be here with you today, to share this joyous occasion. The timing for me is perfect. Since retiring in December, I've been trying to figure out why I had so much fun being a scientist for the last 50 years. And, because you're at the beginning of your careers, it makes sense to share some of the answers I've come up with. So, with apologies to David Letterman, I'm going to present them as:

The Top 10 Reasons to Be Happy Now That You've Earned an Advanced Degree in Science

Starting at the bottom with Reason # 10. You get to make a decent living.

Note I've listed this last. Few of us go into science to make money, although some of you might strike it rich if you end up at the right biotech or pharmaceutical. But at the least, you should make a comfortable living, and all of you will eventually become financially independent of your parents. This, by the way, is one of the reasons your proud parents are smiling today.

Reason # 9. You get to live an honest life.

Science is one human endeavor in which honesty is rewarded. In other disciplines, telling the truth can get you in trouble. For example, few car salesman would say "this is the price I hope you will pay, but I can go much lower if you press me". However, in science you have to apply the strictest ethical standards in collecting, analyzing, and reporting your data. It's insane to do otherwise, because if your results are important, others will attempt to repeat and confirm them.

Reason # 8. You get to avoid boredom.

Every day is different for a scientist. You get to think and speculate about how nature might work, you get to do experiments to test your ideas, you get to read the latest articles in your field, you get to interact with young people who want to learn from you, and, as a member of society, you get to refute popular misconceptions about health, diet, and nutrition. I have to be honest with you, there will be so much for you to do, you will experience stress, maybe even a lot of stress. But, you will never be bored.

Reason # 7. You get to travel and see the world.

Scientists belong to an international community. Experts from all over the world meet to discuss their latest results. As you travel to foreign places for such meetings, you will come to appreciate and respect different cultures. You'll meet people you would otherwise never have encountered, and you'll be exposed to ideas you might never have considered.

Reason # 6. You get to live an intellectual life.

To be successful as a scientist, you will need to be a life-long learner. You have to read the literature, attend lectures, and, I would like to emphasize this, have as many conversations as possible with people who are smarter than you, so that you can learn from them. You have to continuously acquire knowledge, and you have to develop the ability to sift out what's true from what's not true. Louis Pasteur noted that "chance favors the prepared mind". And it's true, sometimes you just need to be lucky in the laboratory, but your chances of being lucky are greatly enhanced if you have a solid knowledge base.

Reason # 5. You get to experience the thrill of discovery.

If you are lucky enough to discover something really important once every 10 years, you will have a very successful career. Paul Boyer observed that "most of your productivity will be like the coal that is mined while searching for diamonds. The coal keeps you in business, but when you find a diamond, it's an incredible high". Normally, science advances slowly and steadily as a result of contributions from many laboratories, but every now and then, an individual will achieve a huge leap forward. This usually comes from challenging dogma. If you are fortunate to be such an individual, you will experience resistance from those invested in the beliefs you are overturning. But, if you're right, your contribution will eventually receive its due recognition, because in science as in Shakespeare, "the truth will out".

Reason # 4. You get to teach the next generation of scientists.

You get to experience the pleasure of sharing your skills, knowledge, and approach to science with young people. Believe me, there is nothing more rewarding than seeing someone you've trained progress and eventually excel in what they do.

Reason # 3. You get to help others.

Discovering how nature works benefits everyone. Your work may be very basic and not have any immediate applications beyond shedding light on the mysteries of life. But that, in itself, is a very worthy goal, and with time others may use the knowledge you have gained for practical purposes. In a best-case scenario, you might be lucky enough to do something that improves the quality of life for millions of people. Being a physician is a very gratifying occupation, and some of you are about to receive degrees in both medicine and science. But, it is as a scientist that you will have the opportunity to affect far more people than anyone could ever treat during a lifetime in a clinic. That is why so many physicians, as well as basic scientists, devote a significant part of their time to research.

Reason # 2. You get to make a lot of friends.

Despite the fact that scientists have often been portrayed in movies and literature as loners, we all know that science is a highly interactive endeavor. You will meet many interesting and smart people during your career. Enjoy their company, and look for opportunities to collaborate with them. If you treat both your colleagues and competitors with respect and kindness, many of these interactions will blossom into friendships. At my advanced age, I am in a position to predict with some level of certainty that when you reach the end of your career, and you look back on what you've done, it will not be the number of papers you've published, nor the citations those papers have received that will bring you the greatest gratification. Instead, it will be the friendships you have formed. So, treasure these relationships and cultivate them along the way, and they will bring you great happiness.

And now the # 1 reason to be happy that you've earned an advanced degree in science:

No more tests, no more qualifying exams, and no more thesis defenses.

You have a graduate degree!!! That means that we attest to the fact that you have the skills and knowledge to successfully pursue a career in science.

So, congratulations to each of you. Take a well-deserved day or two off to celebrate, and then go out there and make us proud! Thank you.